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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1261
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0865
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1813
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3458
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 002732

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, INR/EAP, DRL, EAP/PD
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [KPAO](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: WEST KALIMANTAN: UNDERSCORING THE VITALITY OF
U.S.-INDONESIA RELATIONS

REF: A. JAKARTA 01560

[1](#)B. 06 JAKARTA 12334

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (B)(D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Pol/C spoke September 26 at a university in West Kalimantan on Borneo island, emphasizing the need for Indonesia to play an enhanced role supporting democracy and human rights, especially in Burma. West Kalimantan--a vast area with a fractious, multi-ethnic population--was focused on its first ever direct gubernatorial election. With the incumbent--a Muslim--favored to win, unrest is reportedly developing among members of the aboriginal Dayak group, which believes one of its own should hold the position. Pol/C underlined the need for restraint and for communities to avoid at all costs the sort of internecine violence that has afflicted the area in the past. End Summary.

>> U.S.-Indonesia Cooperation

[1](#)2. (U) Pol/C spoke September 26 at Tanjung Pura University in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, making the following key points:

-- Pol/C emphasized the dynamism of U.S.-Indonesia relations, stressing that the two countries need to continue to think strategically about the relationship. Two key areas that need special focus are reform and the area of "connections," e.g., the links between the two countries and the wider world.

-- Re reform, there is little doubt that Indonesia has become a successful democracy, moving away from authoritarian rule. More progress needs to be made in the areas of governance and rule of law. Accountability was vital--individuals need to be brought to justice if they are corrupt or commit human rights violations.

-- Finally, in the area of connections, Indonesia is a leader in Asia and the world, serving on the UN Security Council from 2007-08. Indonesia needs to do the right thing regarding the Iranian nuclear program. Moreover, as East Asia's largest democracy, it needs to play an enhanced role supporting democracy and human rights, especially in Burma where the regime is dealing brutally with all opposition.

13. (U) The approximately 75 faculty and students in attendance peppered Pol/C with various questions and comments. U.S. policy in Iraq came under criticism, as did policy regarding Iran. One student wanted to know whether the USG really supported Indonesia's territorial integrity; Pol/C underlined that we did. A faculty member noted President Bush's announcement of further sanctions on the Myanmar regime, wondering what more could be done. Pol/C stressed that it was particularly important at this time that ASEAN states speak up in united fashion and condemn the regime.

>> A Lively Race for Governor

14. (C) Pol/C and Pol FSN visited Pontianak, September 25-26. Pontianak, a city of some 700,000 people, is the capital of West Kalimantan, a vast province lying astride the Equator with an ethnically-mixed population of roughly 4.5 million. (Note: The population is about 40 percent Christian/animist Dayak, 40 percent Muslim Malay, and 20 percent made up of various groups, including a wealthy Chinese business class.) The region was abuzz over its first ever direct gubernatorial election slated to take place on November 15.

15. (C) Incumbent governor, Usman Jafar, a Muslim of Malay descent, is favored to win. Jafar leads the so-called "Harmony Coalition," which has received the endorsement of several parties, including Golkar and the Islamic United Development Party (PPP). Contacts reported that Jafar was relatively popular, having sponsored a number of economic development projects. Cornelius Kimha, a Christian Dayak, is said to be running a very strong second; his candidacy is endorsed by the Indonesian Democratic Struggle Party (PDI-P).

>> Dayak Unrest?

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16. (C) Contacts reported that there is growing unrest among some Dayaks, who believe that one of their own should hold the governor position. Father William Chang, a Catholic priest and human rights activist, told Pol/C that if the election is not clean and fair and Kimha is seen as being cheated out of a win then "some hard-line Dayaks might take matters into their own hands."

17. (C) A.R. Mecer, a Dayak who is running for vice-governor on a ticket considered lagging behind the two front-runners, told Pol/C that he did not think there would be violence under any situation. He allowed, however, that there was some unrest developing among Dayaks "who felt stuck in poverty." Pol/C emphasized the need for restraint and for communities to avoid at all costs the sort of internecine violence that has afflicted the area in the past. (Note: In various incidents, the most recent in 2001, Dayak mobs killed hundreds of settlers from Madura island. In the late 1960s, Dayak groups also attacked members of the Chinese community, killing hundreds.)
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